

Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station.

BULLETIN 59.

WOOSTER, OHIO, MAY, 1895

NOXIOUS WEEDS ALONG THOROUGHFARES AND THEIR DESTRUCTION.

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ORGANIZATION OF THE OHIO AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION.

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BULLETIN

OF THE

Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station.

NUMBER 59.

May, 1895.

NOXIOUS WEEDS ALONG THOROUGHFARES AND THEIR DESTRUCTION.

Especially for roadmasters, superintendents and road supervisors.

BY AUGUSTINE D. SELBY, BOTANIST.

In the treatment of the weed problem in Ohio, it does not seem possible to leave out of consideration the weeds of unoccupied lands, and especially those along highways and railroads. The number of weeds is very large and constantly increasing, and the habits of such weedy plants as grow within road fences will be almost or quite as variable as the general weeds of the given localities, yet there are particular reasons why attention should be given to roadside weeds now. At least one new weed pest, the Russian thistle, is attacking the State by this route almost exclusively; the cockle-bur has been in possession of roadsides for a long time, while prickly lettuce and other weeds of all sorts are neglected in these places and spread to adjacent lands. Travel on highways, the feeding of horses by the roadside, the transportation of products along railways, all conspire to spread weeds more effectively than they are scattered in the materials applied by the farmer himself.

OBJECT OF THIS INQUIRY.

It is the object of the present inquiry to collect, if possible, more complete data concerning roadside weeds than is now in the possession of the Experiment Station or than can soon be secured by representatives of the Station; and since a mere knowledge of them will do no good without remedies, it is hoped to secure a more thorough compliance with the statutory requirements as to weed destruction in our thoroughfares. For this double purpose the request for information is made directly to those

having the roadways in charge, to the superintendents and supervisors of public highways, and to the engineers of way, road masters and section foremen of railways, as well as to the interested citizens who use these lines of travel.

Those who receive this bulletin are therefore urgently requested to make use of the blank page on the back, fill it out, in pencil, with as large a list of roadside weeds as is consistent with circumstances, noting, when possible, relative "badness," abundance, etc.; and to mail this list to the Experiment Station, Wooster, O.

But not this alone; the next step equally desired, even more to be desired, is the application of proper measures to reduce the injury resulting from roadside weeds. The urgent need of promptness in weed cutting and other means of destruction requires to be emphasized. Ohio roadsides are capable of very great improvement with respect to the weeds along them.

CONDITION OF ROADSIDES.

A wide variation may be found in this regard. Some counties will show clean roadsides, with scarcely any weeds, and an abundant growth of grass, while others have the reverse conditions frequent, if not prevalent. All turf forming grasses or clovers are usually welcomed, although the white melilot, sometimes called Bokhara or sweet clover, and possibly others, will be excepted. Only one who has ridden through such an array of weeds on either side of the road as may be found on some in Ohio, can form the extreme conception of bad roadsides.

The care of roadsides generally rests with the road supervisors and the township trustees; on improved roads there are superintendents and in villages and cities a street commissioner. Perhaps a manifest interest on the part of citizens in the various districts will aid in the proper discharge of their duties by the legal custodians.

RAILROAD RIGHTS OF WAY.

These are of course to be cared for by the railroad companies holding them. The statutes require burning them over at certain times as well as the cutting of weeds and bushes. On the whole the cutting is more carefully done along the railways than on highways, but improvement can and should be made in respect to time of cutting. This is often done too late, after the seeds are matured. It is easier, rather than more difficult, to do the cutting earlier, and this will be more effective to destroy weeds.

HOW CUTTING DESTROYS WEEDS.

Cutting weeds is recommended chiefly to prevent the ripening of seeds. For actual weed destruction the cutting must be done before the seeds are formed, usually before blossoming is far advanced. Cutting certain weeds below the crown will be of great advantage, but may not be expected, usually. The dates fixed in the Ohio Weed Law are intended to secure seed destruction of nearly all plants. *The importance of early and repeated cutting will scarcely be over estimated.*

Those whose duty it is to give directions in this matter are urged to make the requirements plain and the work effectual by supervision.

DISTRIBUTION OF THIS BULLETIN.

Copies of this bulletin will be distributed through township and city clerks, also through engineers of maintenance of way. The clerk receiving this bulletin, in each case, is urgently requested to file a copy for himself, one for the use of the township trustees or street commissioners, and to distribute a copy to each road supervisor or superintendent within his jurisdiction, calling attention to the information sought, and to the requirement for each in the way of weed destruction. Engineers of maintenance of way will receive copies in such number as they may require. These may be distributed for use among section foremen.

IDENTIFICATION OF WEEDS AND DETERMINATION OF NOXIOUS CHARACTER

When questions of identity or character of weeds arise, these may usually be determined by sending specimens, in flower if possible, with brief statement and sender's address on package, to OHIO EXPERIMENT STATION, Wooster, O. Such will receive attention, and all inquiries of this sort will be answered. Sender's address on the package is needed to identify the specimen sent, since a large number of packages is constantly coming in. When several specimens are sent at once, a paper slip, with number, may be attached to each. An illustrated bulletin upon the Russian thistle will be sent upon application.

OHIO WEED LAW.

The following is the Ohio statute pertaining to the destruction of weeds, as amended and passed April 25, 1893. (Ohio Laws, vol. 90, p. 301)

SECTION 4730. The superintendent of any improved or macadamized road, supervisor of county and township roads, or street commissioner of any city or village, shall, between the 15th and 30th days of June, and between the 1st and 15th days of August, and between the 15th and 30th days of September of each year, cut all brush, briars, Canada or common thistles, or other noxious weeds growing within the limits of any county or township road, improved or macadamized road, street or alley, within their jurisdiction. Such superintendent or supervisor shall be allowed \$1.50 per day for all necessary labor, to be allowed by the trustees and paid by the treasurer of such township out of the road fund then in his hands. The superintendent or supervisor of any such roads may allow any landowner or tenant to cut and destroy any such brush, briars or weeds, growing on such highways, [along] the lands abutting on such highways owned or occupied by such landowner or tenant, and before such work is performed allow and fix a reasonable compensation therefor, which amount shall be credited on the road tax of that year assessed against said premises. The superintendent or manager of any toll road shall cut and destroy all brush, briars and noxious weeds growing within the limit of any such road, between the days of each month as above specified in this section, and in default thereof and for five days thereafter the trustees of any township through which any such road passes shall cause any such brush, briars and weeds to be cut and destroyed, and shall have right of action against any such toll road company, for the amount of such work, together with one hundred per cent. penalty, and cost of action to be recovered before any justice of the peace of such county.

SECTION 4732. The trustees of any township of this state, upon information in writing that Canada or common thistles, oxeye daisy, wild parsnip, sweet clover, wild carrots, teasels, burdock or cockle-burs, are growing on any lands in their township and are about to spread or mature seed, between the first day of June and the fifteenth day of October of each year, said trustees shall cause notice in writing to be served upon the owner, lessee, agent or tenant having charge of any such lands, notifying such owner, lessee or agent or tenant that Canada or common thistles or other noxious weeds mentioned in this section are growing on such lands, and that such Canada thistles or other noxious weeds shall be cut and destroyed within five days after the service of such notice; and in default thereof, that said township trustees will enter upon such lands and cut and destroy such Canada or common thistles or other noxious weeds; and that the cost of cutting such Canada or common thistles or other noxious weeds, with the cost of such notice, will become a lien against said lands. Any constable or deputy marshal of any city or village, or deputy, is hereby authorized to make service and return of any such notice, and the fees for such services and return shall be the same as are allowed for service and return of summons in civil cases before magistrates. If any owner, lessee, agent or tenant having charge of any such lands shall fail to comply with such notice, the township trustees shall cause said Canada or common thistles or other noxious weeds to be cut and destroyed, and may employ any person to perform such labor, and allow such person fifteen cents per hour for the time occupied in performing such labor, and pay the sum for such labor out of any money in the treasury of said township not otherwise appropriated, and take receipt for the same. Said township trustees shall make return in writing to the board of commissioners of their county, with a statement of the charges for their services, the amount paid to the person for performing such labor, together with the fees of the officers who made the service of notice and return, with a proper description of the premises; and the same having been allowed, shall be entered upon the tax duplicate, and shall be a lien against said lands, from and after the date

of such entry on the duplicate, and shall be collected as other taxes, and returned to the township with the general fund.

SECTION 4732a. That in all cities and incorporated villages, except cities of the first and second grade of the first class and first and second grade of the second class, the mayor shall, during the month of May of each year, cause notice to be published for two consecutive weeks in one or more newspapers published in the corporation, or by posting up written or printed notices in said city or village at three public places for ten days next previous to the first day of June of each year, warning the owners, lessees or agents of lots and lands within such city or village to cause all Canada or common thistles, or other noxious weeds mentioned in section forty-seven hundred and thirty-two, growing on any such lots or lands within said corporation, to be cut and destroyed so that they do not mature seed or spread to adjoining lands. The common council of such city or village shall, upon information in writing that Canada or common thistles or other noxious weeds mentioned in section forty-seven hundred and thirty-two are growing on any such lands, within their corporation, between the tenth day of June and the fifteenth day of October of each year, [shall] cause such Canada or common thistle or other noxious weeds to be cut and destroyed so that they do not mature seed or spread to other lands, and said council may employ any person to cut and destroy said noxious weeds and allow such person so employed fifteen cents per hour for the time employed in such labor. And said council shall pay said amount out of the money of the general fund in the treasury of said city or village not otherwise appropriated, and take a receipt therefor. And said council shall make return in writing to the board of commissioners of their county, with a statement of the amount paid for such labor, and one dollar additional as a penalty on each lot or parcel of land containing less than one acre, and with two dollars on each lot or parcel containing more than one acre. The same having been allowed, the auditor shall enter the amount so certified to him on the tax duplicate of the county against the lots or lands on which said Canada or common thistles or other noxious weeds were cut and destroyed, and the amounts shall be a lien against said lots or lands from and after such entry, and shall be collected as other taxes are collected, and returned to such city or village with the general fund; provided, that [if] any such owner of such lots or lands shall tender to the treasurer of such township in cases of townships, or to the treasurer of such city or village in the case of city or village, the amounts so chargeable against such lots or lands for such labor, together with the penalty as certified to by the clerk of said township, city or village showing the amount of such charges and penalty, the treasurer shall receive the amount so tendered, upon which said lots and lands shall be discharged from further liability.

SECTION 4732b. Township trustees shall be entitled to \$1.50 per day for their services under this act; the mayor of any city or village, or trustees of any township, or superintendent or other officer of any toll road, or superintendent of any improved or macadamized road, or supervisor of any county or township road, or street commissioner of any city or village, who neglects or refuses to perform their duties as mentioned in sections 4730, 4732 and 4732a, shall be fined in the sum of fifty dollars in any court having competent jurisdiction of such cases; such fines shall go into the road fund of the township in cases against township or toll road officers; and into the street fund in cases against mayors or other municipal officers.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force on and after the first day of May, 1893.

THE ROADSIDE WEEDS OF OHIO.*

Report from

Postoffice

County

Township

Official position

* Please detach this page, write upon it a list of the most troublesome roadside weeds in your vicinity, and mail it to the EXPERIMENT STATION, Wooster, O. Send specimens of weeds that you cannot name.